EXTRACTS

FROM THE

MINUTES

OF THE

UNITED STATES MILITARY PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,

AT AN OCCASIONAL MEETING

HELD AT

WASHINGTON,

JANUARY 30, 1808.

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UNITED STATES MILITARY PHILOSOPHICAL

SOCIETY,

AT AN ORDINARY MEETING

HELD AT

WASHINGTON,

ON THE 30TH INST.

The following Circular to the Members in Washington, produced a numerous attendance:

WASHINGTON, JANUARY 22, 1808.

SIR,

THERE being now in this city a considerable number of the Members of the United States Military Philosophical Society, I think it my duty in conformity to the 3d section of the 4th chapter of the Constitution, to call an occasional meeting to be held at the first apartment on the right hand in the War Office, on Saturday the 30th inst. for the purpose of stating to the members, who have not hitherto had an opportunity of meeting the Society, the motives which gave rise to the institution, its object, progress, and present state, together with an account of such communications as have been recently made to it.

Besides the reasons assigned, which have impelled me to this measure, it will be a circumstance of pride and pleasure to see so many respectable characters assembled, by whose good councils the Society may be directed to such measures as will in future facilitate the collection and dissemination of Military Science; and I hope I may anticipate the satisfaction each member will enjoy by a fraternal interview with his associates. This early notice is given to prevent previous engagement, and I trust that there will be a full and punctual attendance: The Chair will be taken at 7 o'clock precisely.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully,

Your most obedient servant,

JONA. WILLIAMS, PRESIDENT U. S. M. P. S.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE MINUTES OF THE

UNITED STATES MILITARY PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,

AT AN OCCASIONAL MEETING HELD AT WASHINGTON, JANUARY 30th, 1808.

UNITED STATES MILITARY PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

IN conformity to a provision in the constitution of the United States Military Philosophical Society, a meeting was called by Col. JONATHAN WILLIAMS, President thereof, and held at the War Office on Saturday the 30th of January.

The business was opened by the President, who laid before the Society a comprehensive view of the origin, progress, and present state of the Society, together with a summary account of the communications and donations that have been made to it since the publication in January, 1807.

THE ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE thought it an indispensable duty, on my passage through this city, to call you together; and it is particularly gratifying to meet you in the capital of the union, at a time when, of all others, the usefulness and importance of such an institution, as this is, must come home to all your feelings. Two belligerent nations divide the power of Europe between them; the one, extending its maritime arm over all the watry world, the other, either controlling or holding within its grasp the whole territory between the Mediterranean and Baltic seas. Neutrality has been driven from the ocean; and is now hidden within our ports. With both these gigantic powers we have necessary relations, and to preserve as much as possible a just impartiality between them, the government has suspended our commercial connexions with all. This state of things cannot long continue; but whatever may be the event, in whatever direction the storm may burst, we ought to be ready for it: not merely so; for should it blow over, we ought to remember the old adage, and in future most sacredly adhere to it; "In peace prepare for war."

The sentiment contained in this adage gave the first idea to the founders of this Society, and the complete exemplification of it, is all its end and aim.

It never was intended that it should become a political engine to aid any sect or party ; it has no more to do with politics, as such, than it has with religion ; it respects the correct principles of both, but meddles with neither. It is founded on patriotism of the purest kind ; it proposes to defend this its own country, and while its efforts are directed to draw forth all the energy of the nation, its object is to procure, preserve and perpetuate peace.

Scientia in bello pax—This is its motto, and the seal displays the maxim. There we see Minerva causing an olive branch to start from the ground by the touch of her spear ; the goddess of Science, in full armour, produces peace by the very lance with which she is prepared for battle.

The wars of conquest the Society disclaims ; the contests of ambition it despises : Firm to one object, it has paid no attention to the shades of difference in political opinions, and takes into its bosom the well-meaning patriots of all parties ; relying firmly, that whosoever may administer the government, we shall all be true to the principles of the constitution and support the authorities it has created ; and whenever the time shall come which may call forth our exertions, we shall break to pieces the shackles of prejudice, and unite in one common cause !

The United States having become a nation, within the memory of many of us, it naturally follows, that institutions, which are independent of foreign control, must have a recent origin. Many have risen in our country from very minute causes ; the accidental meetings of a few men of talents, a few hints, perhaps, from some persons present at these meetings, have given rise to most of the societies for the promotion of useful knowledge, of agriculture, of commerce, of the arts and sciences, in almost every quarter of our extensive country. It is hoped, therefore, that this offspring of the corps of Engineers, itself but just emerging from infancy, will be viewed with complacency by all who consider that the importance of the end ought to justify the temerity of the means : An acorn, planted by a child, may become the pride of the forest.

It must be self-evident to the reflecting mind, in taking a retrospect of the origin, cause, and various events of our revolution, that there exists in our country a very considerable mass of military science, derived by many still living, from hardy experience in the field. By others from tradition, now locked up in the stores of memory, which they have received from their sires, who have "fought their battles o'er again," for the instruction of their children. And much may lie buried in the dusty files of neglected cabinets. By others in fine, who since the termination of our struggles for independence, have travelled over Europe, and collected rich

treasures, from personal intercourse with the great characters of the age, or by free access to extensive military deposits. While existing in this scattered state, our country cannot derive advantage from the improvement of her sons. Individuals might possess genius and talents, and be proficient in architecture, sculpture and painting; but, without edifices, without statues, without the exhibition of the breathing canvass—the genius would expire, the talents would be lost, and the art would be buried with the artist. It is thus in military science—without plans, without models, without the detail of all existing causes and effects, military experience is confined within the limits of human life; and every successor has to learn in the same dear school' in which he can arrive at proficiency only, when his vigour is exhausted. To arrest these ravages of time, to collect into one mass all the military knowledge now dispersed, in order to give it out again, as the exigencies of our country may require, for the purposes of universal instruction, are the primary objects of the plan; and form the motives for attempting a permanent establishment.

The theories of Europe are undoubtedly the basis of a military education. But, the practice of our own warriors in our own country, the experience and observation of men, who have had local circumstances in view, are far more essential. With this knowledge we may be able, in case of invasion, to renew the scenes of Saratoga and York.

It will naturally occur, that although the title of the Society expressly designates it as a military one, yet, the same title connects it with every branch of physics. Science is in its own nature so diffuse, that it is almost impossible to designate any dividing lines. Astronomy, geography and mathematics, run into each other at every step. Chymistry and mineralogy are inseparable. The laws of motion, mechanics, and projectiles are also interwoven, and in some way or other (although the extreme points may be distant) the gradations become insensible. Military science embraces all these branches, it therefore has as good a claim to the title of philosophical as any other, and considering the end in view *(peace)* the term is doubtless appropriate.

It would be tedious, and to this audience absolutely useless, to go into farther detail, to establish a position which displays its own demonstration.

After the plan of the Society was formed, it was submitted to the President of the United States, requesting him to become its patron. The request was readily granted in terms of great complacency, and in a manner highly gratifying to the feelings of its projectors. Although this can only be considered binding on any future President, as far as relates to a decorous regard to his predecessor and the public utility resulting from our association; yet there can be no doubt of its being continued to us as long as we shall, by our labors, continue to merit the public attention. A constitution was formed, but as in similar cases, it was impossible to foresee the

operation of all its parts. When it came to be put into practice, some of its conditions, although of very trifling import as to principle, became extremely inconvenient; one of these conditions was, the restricting the meetings to a place, where only a few members could attend; and it is owing to this amendment in the third section of the fourth chapter, that I am enabled to meet you at this time. This constitution has been sent with a circular letter to all the members; and it will be understood that the approbation of this meeting is tacitly expressed, unless some member shall, before we separate, make any remarks to the contrary, in which case a vote will be taken. Having a few copies of the constitution here, they are laid before you. In one of the bye-laws it was enacted, that in case a member did not accept his election in four calender months, it was understood that he had declined—but this was found to operate very injuriously: For in some instances the notification failed, in others, the answers did not get to hand; and most of the members who did not answer, were unacquainted with the necessity of it, since the notices did not specify any such condition. This bye-law, therefore, has been repealed, and members are not limited to time; though it is certainly a reasonable expectation that an answer should be given. The members who have accepted are many, and in doing so, there have been expressions of great satisfaction on the occasion. Even the few who have declined, have done it in terms of high approbation of the measure, politely acknowledging the intended honor, and the reasons for declining have been of an individual nature, under circumstances altogether personal to themselves. To this, however, there have been two exceptions—both from men who have filled dignified stations, and are equally distinguished for their high characters and public services. The first declined for reasons which were so exclusively political, that they were considered irrelevant to the objects of this society, and of course need not be noticed. The second declined for more appropriate reasons, which are best expressed in the words of the writer himself. "I "can (says he) entertain no doubt of the importance of improving and extending military know- "ledge in the United States; but to that end I think other means than those embraced by the "plan of your institution requisite. Enough of theory may be found in books accessible to "every military man, or if (for want of adequate funds) a library of the best books on the subject "be not now attainable by the officers; provision ought to be made by law. This library may be "lodged where the collections by the Society are proposed to be deposited. The *one* and the "*great thing* needful is the application of rules in the *practical* instruction of a *competent number* "of our citizens who are inclined to devote themselves to the military life, in *all* the branches of "the military art. By their instrumentality, military knowledge might be speedily diffused "throughout the army, whenever the situation of the United States shall make the raising of "one indispensable or expedient."

These sentiments indeed display to us how useful a member this gentleman might have been. He states to us what ought to replace this institution, by stating the very objects it aims at —"A military library where the collections of the Society are to be deposited."—"Application "of rule to practical instruction," and "the diffusion of knowledge through an army:" All

these are embraced in the plan. But he goes on—" Should Congress refuse to make such a " provision, individual efforts will be of little avail." To this opinion we ought not to subscribe ; what would become of every species of individual zeal, if we were to declare at the threshold that it would be unavailing ? Let us adopt a contrary opinion, and say that individual zeal *must* prevail, and that as long as we live the ill success of its efforts shall never be imputed to *our* neglect ? The very objects here pointed out will be attained, our society will become a corporate body, it will be established in the capital of the union, and its self-evident usefulness will supersede the necessity of all reasoning upon the subject; combined with and taking under its fostering protection the military academy, already established by law, it will afford the most useful lessons to our young military students, and both the establishments will flourish together, under the eyes of the collected wisdom of our nation.

No Society can exist without funds : for however small it expenses may be, they should be equally borne. In 1806, a contribution of five dollars per annum was imposed upon each member, payable at any time within the first six months of every year, and at whatever time of the year an election is made, the contribution for that year becomes due. A sum so trifling, cannot, it is presumed, be thought burdensome ; and when, at a future day, the Society shall have a surplus stock, premiums may be offered for such models and other works of genius as may deserve the encouragement, either of a pecuniary reward, or the honorable testimony of a medal ; and important military publications will be purchased to enrich its library, which at present consists only of donations. All views of amassing wealth for any other purpose are too mean and unworthy to admit a supposition that the Society can ever be suspected of them. It has begun with the greater sum, owing to the necessary expenses at the outset, and the small number of contributors. This tax will decrease in proportion as the members grow numerous ; it cannot increase, and may be reduced to a very trifle.

The Society has paid all expenses hitherto, and the treasurer has at this time upwards of two hundred and seventy dollars in hand ; but the Society stands engaged to pay about fifty dollars for some models of arms now making, and four hundred to the engraver of the diploma, which when finished will be deposited in the hands of the treasurer, Mr. Popham in New-York, of which, notice will be given, that each member may apply for his own. In this place, it may not be improper to give an account of the drawing for this object, with which the Society has been favored by Mr. Louis Simond, of New-York, one of its members. At the superior part is a representation of the city of Syracuse, and on an advanced tower Archimedes is seen, with a large concave mirror, collecting and reflecting the rays of the sun on the fleet of Marcellus, some of which are retiring in confusion, while others are enveloped in flame. Around the picture we perceive a collection of ancient military insignia, and in the foreground are some of the more modern and pondrous implements of war. This is intended as a representation of the first member of our motto : Science in War—the latter member being the consequence or result of the

former one, is represented by emblems of peace: The implements of husbandry on one side, and those of fishery on the other, are displayed in pendant festoons; and below them is an elliptical medallion, containing a rural view, under a mild and cheering sky, with one man ploughing and another sowing. Either of which may be understood to represent the alternate husbandman and warrior, so often cited as the model for a military chief, in the act of cultivating his "little fields." In the body of the plate is a blank certificate in elegant script, to be filled with the name of the member elected.

When the original projectors had formed the plan, it was a matter of serious consideration, how to designate characters for members. It was at first thought proper to select bodies of men generally, such as officers of the army and navy, legislators, and men in dignified stations. But it occurred, that by choosing in that collective manner, no compliment would be paid to the genius or talents of any individual; and therefore, what was designed to be an honor, might not be felt as such. It was of course determined to make some selections individually, not with a view of filling the Society, but to extend the right of proposing candidates, and nominations were made by each of the founders, according as their personal knowledge or the general public estimation of characters directed, without any previous knowledge of their disposition to associate with them, and without any attempt at exclusive choice. As the Society has increased, this mode of selection consequently increases with it, every member having a right of nominating whom he pleases, and it is hoped and expected that it will be exercised.

But, as the dignity of the institution requires (now that it has taken so respectable a consistency) that what is intended an honorable tribute of respect, should be so considered by the receiver, it will be prudent in each proposing member, to have some good reason to believe, that the candidate he proposes should not only have the requisite qualities for an useful associate, but be of a disposition to aid, as far as may be in his power, the laudable views of the Society.

It is hoped that no man whose pretensions to such an association indisputably result from station or character, will suppose himself to have been purposely omitted. It would have been presumptuous in the projectors to have monopolised the right of nomination by at once choosing all whom they esteemed worthy.

Having thus laid before you the motives by which the founders of this Society have been influenced, and the measures that have been taken to give it a form and consistence, with a slight expression of its views in attempting a permanent establishment, I shall proceed to give an account of its progress and present state. But my memory intrudes a melancholy reflection; and forces me into a sorrowful digression.

Young as the Society is, it has lived long enough to see three of its distinguished members snatched from it by the hand of death!—Paterson! The enlightened and virtuous patriot—the profound impartial judge—the unassuming and useful citizen—the amiable friend and social companion, is numbered with the dead!—Preble! The pride of our navy—the hero of Tripoli—he who silenced barbarian batteries, is himself entombed in awful silence! Bissil! A veteran indeed—who, after sharing in our revolution, continued in the army till the close of the last year closed his efficient services—in arms, to the last moment of his life, he died, uniformly supporting the character of a brave and honest soldier! But although dead, they shall live in the memory of this Society—they will stand upon its records; and notwithstanding the mournful monosyllable shall be written against their names, posterity will see with complacency, and the members of this society will remark with pride, that such distinguished patriots continue to adorn the list of their associates.

It is natural for most men to hope that their good deeds will not be forgotten; and we may be allowed to feel some satisfaction in the reflection that our names will live in the annals of this institution. If this be a weakness, it is a laudable one. Because it tends to excite an useful emulation.

At the close of the last year, a circular communication was made to the then existing members; stating, in a summary way, all its transactions to that period. In my circular letter, accompanying that communication, I took the liberty of observing, that it cannot be too often nor too strongly reiterated, that as much as our government is opposed to a standing army, so much ought we to preserve and make perfect the means of organising a "temporary one." We place our great national defence, in case of a contest that should require a very vigorous effort, on the militia of our country. Be it so. But, ought not our citizens to be instructed? Ought they not to have disseminated among them as far as it is practicable, every principle of discipline, tactics and martial regulation? Ought they not to know what has been formerly done in the like cases, in order to know what is worthy of imitation, and what might be avoided. Of what avail is individual courage, individual patriotism, and individual talents, if the combination fails! It is not elegant parade, expert exercise on *chosen* fields, nor a general knowledge of arms that makes the soldier. It is discipline, it is subordination, it is confidence in each other, and a certainty that all will stand to the end of the contest, whatever may be the perils or the privations it occasions. It is in short, individualizing a body of troops, so that its head can direct the operations of its parts, as effectually as the mind can direct the operations of the natural body, and command the functions of all its members. When we speak of bringing untaught militia into the field to repel invasion at any point, *until* regular troops can be brought to reinforce or to replace them, what do we (in effect) say to our citizens? We say that they are to go into the field to be beaten; but although beaten they will check the enemy till more regular troops come on, to take the glory of a victory rendered the more easy by their sacrifices: Like the troops of

ants in Africa, which extinguish a fire by sending their front ranks to be first consumed in smothering it, that the remainder may march in safety over the crust of their cindered bodies. But who are these militia so cheaply considered as to be thus exposed? The fathers, the husbands, the sons, and the brothers of the surrounding families are brought to oppose well instructed and well disciplined troops, every man of whom that may be killed is in the same moment forgotten; while our dispersed militia return to homes, where at every door either a mother, a wife, a daughter or a sister stands in despair, lamenting their losses, and loading with reproaches that country which did not provide disciplined soldiers to meet foreign veterans.

Our warriors of former days have performed many brilliant exploits; but they may have met with insurmountable obstacles. Our infant navy has performed the feats of manhood—but no naval character will say that mistakes have not been committed. The knowledge of both, that have accrued by land and sea, would now be useful. A good pilot thinks himself but half instructed if he only knows a safe channel; he ought to know where the rocks and quicksands lie, in case he should be driven out of it.

I remember in the year '74, hearing a noble Lord in the House of Peers exclaim, "What signifies the Americans having an army—they have neither discipline nor military knowledge, and cannot withstand British veterans?" The battle of Lexington, which soon followed, may have proved the former part of the assertion; but it shewed also what courage inspired by patriotism can do. The victory of that memorable day, however, was but a spark produced by sudden collision, and no good statesman, nor any experienced general would rely on such a state of things for a long and steady resistance.

On the continent of Europe we find not only the historical traces of every campaign most carefully preserved, but all the motions of the troops, all the positions taken, all the changes of the face of the country, whether by change of circumstances or change of place—detailed plans in short of every battle, are fully delineated, and the engravings are lodged among the military archives of the nation. But with us, what have we? We have rapid sketches of the public events of a civil and military nature crouded together, in biographical and political histories, in such a manner as to render a separation impossible, with any degree of intelligence on the subject; in a few instances indeed, these are accompanied by maps or plans, and attempts at delineation by an historian who writes at the distance of many years, for readers not interested in the military manœuvres by which this battle was won, or the errors by which that was lost. If we had regular plans of all the battles that have been fought in America, if we had topographical maps of the different passes, the open country, the defiles, the plains, the ravines, the creeks, all the advantages and obstacles upon a large scale, we should know the points to which our enemy should be decoyed, and the manner of attacking him to certain advantage. But above all, the notes, the remarks, the hints, the plans, and all the ideas that were made or expressed at the

time, either written or verbal, by the great characters that may have gone before us, or may still live, would be a desirable acquisition. What makes the want of these particulars the more necessary, is, the unfavorable impression and discouraging conclusions that have been drawn from former failures, which if all the circumstances were known, might serve to establish a very opposite maxim.

We have heard it a thousand times repeated, that batteries cannot annoy ships: because in the early part of our revolution, the temporary works on North River, bearing that denomination, have been passed with impunity.

All we know at this day is the naked fact, which, without the attendant circumstances, ought no more to influence the judgment than ancient failures of an attempt to fly should prejudice us against the art of ærostation. But another naked fact of an opposite nature is well known, and the vestige of it is still existing in the Delaware. But it will be said that local circumstances were also different. This is the very point in question; what were these local circumstances? What were the causes of immediate failure in one instance, and firm resistance in the other? If the living characters who directed these operations, and have acquired a just tribute of fame, would deposit all the details of them in this Society, many useful hints might be given and applied to works now to be undertaken.

I beg leave to close this subject with a remark: That although enthusiasm upon most occasions tends much to lessen the weight of an opinion, and the soundness of the judgment is generally measured by the considerate coolness of the expression; yet, when important machines are to be put in motion by small and minute means, the elasticity of the spring has sometimes an effect which no other power could produce. The spring in this instance I acknowledge to be weak, but if the parts of the machine should sustain harmonious motion, it may eventually realise enthusiastic expectations, and reward zealous and faithful endeavors for the public good.

The President then laid before the Society the following summary view of the communications and donations that have been made since the last publication in January, 1807. | x

SUMMARY ACCOUNT OF

COMMUNICATIONS AND DONATIONS.

THE PRESIDENT prefaced his summary amount of COMMUNICATIONS and DONATIONS, by observing, that owing to his absence from the records, and ignorance at the time of leaving West Point, that he should come to the seat of government; he was not prepared to lay before the Society *all* the communications that have been received, and had principally his memory to rely on in the description he was about to give.

1. General Davie, now of South Carolina, but formerly one of our envoys to France, has furnished the Society with a description in manuscript of the flying or horse artillery, then introduced into the French armies, which was written and presented to him by General Kosciusko in Paris. This is a sort of manuel by which every manœuvre may be formed with ease, and is much in the style of military manuels in general. To the experienced artillerist it is of itself sufficiently plain, but to make it a work of instruction to military students, it ought to be accompanied by plates, without which it cannot be compleatly understood, *unless* explained by a teacher.

The first principle stated is, that the manœuvres of horse artillery are always *a la prolonge*, that is, with a long rope, and the writer seems to premise that this method is already too well known to need description. As that, however, is not the case in this country, it may not be amiss in this place to make an extract from a translation from the works of de Sheel, by the President of this Society, relative to the *prolonge*. "One end of a rope is attached to, and made to take "several turns round the guides of the limber, which is separated from its carriage; then pas- "sing over the limber it makes one turn round the pintle, and going over the ammunition box, "(which is supposed to be placed upon the guides) the other end is made fast to the lashing ring "of the trail of the gun carriage, the length of the cord being about 25 feet between the trail "and the limber, and to the latter the horses are tackled in the ordinary way; so that the car- "riage on which the gun is fixed travels 25 feet distant from its limber, the curve of the trail "causing it to run over any obstacles that might be found on the ground, as the runner of a sled "would do. In case of any intervening hill or hollow, the rope is made longer by letting out "some of its turns in proportion to the height or depth, so that in one case the horses will "have gained foot-hold on the top, before the weight to be drawn arrives at the foot of the

" ascent, and in the other they cannot be overtaken by the carriage before they get to the bot-
" tom, where they will be at the distance of the whole length of the cord."

As a further illustration of the horse or flying artillery, Lieut. John R. Fenwick, adjutant of the marine corps, a member of the Society, has presented some " reflections on the present " system of horse artillery," principally translated from D'Artubies Artillerist's Manuel. By these means, and by an essay on artillery, contained in a memoir to the First Consul of France by General Espinasse, it would be easy to digest a plan of managing our artillery in the field, so as to give it the greatest possible effect, to enable it to assume the best positions, to transport itself with celerity, and to attack the enemy at points which could never be foreseen or prevented by any invading force whatever. Our artillery, though at thirty miles distance, when the sun goes down, might fire the morning gun into an enemy's camp.

In making this digest, however, it would be necessary to make some variations from the European system, owing to the more rough face of our country, these variations would as readily suggest themselves in this case as they have done in the adaptation of travelling carriages generally.

2. Captain Zebulon Pike, of the United States's Infantry, has presented the Society with an Escopate, which is the carabine of the Spanish cavalry, in a case by which it is slung to the bow of the saddle with a cartridge box of the same nation, of green velvet with gold embroidery. The following is an extract of a letter from Captain Pike, accompanying these presents, dated 19th October, 1807 : " It may be proper to observe that they were the arms of an officer, " consequently of a better quality than those of the common dragoons, and are all of the manu-
" facture of New Spain, except the barrel of the escopate ; their value in that country was
" about eighty five dollars ; from this model some judgments may be formed of the progress
" the arts have made. The escopate is gold bushed, with the arms of Spain, in a gold stamp
" on the butt of the barrel, guard, &c. It carries an ounce ball, and shoots at fifty yards with
" astonishing precision ; at a farcher distance I have never tried it. I propose to do myself the
" honor of making a communication on the organization and discipline of the Spanish cavalry
" of New Spain, of which I have a considerable knowledge, having been escorted by various
" corps of them for the space of four months."

3. A manuscript treatise on martial law, adapted to the customs, usages, and existing statutes of the United States, has been presented by Major Alexander Macomb, of the corps of engineers.

The ninth chapter of the constitution expressly prohibits the Society from giving any judgmenr or opinion, in its collective capacity, on any literary performance, which must rest on its own merit and the credit of the author ; but this obligation does not extend to individuals, and

Generals Davie and Pinckney of South Carolina, have by letters to the author, bestowed great commendations on its " perspicuous, correct, and comprehensive view of the rights and duties " of the citizen, acting in a military capacity."

Major Macomb has undertaken to print this work at his own expence and risque, presenting the Society with a certain number of copies, and he requested the President to permit him to withdraw the copy for that purpose. This has been done by the President, under the tacit acquiescence of the Society where it was proposed from the chair.

4. General Armstrong, our minister in Paris, transmitted to the Society in the course of the last summer, two valuable works, adorned with many explanatory and elegantly engraved plates; one a system of modern tactics, and the other the campaigns of Bonaparte, and there have lately been received from him the communications mentioned in the following accompanying note.

" The manuscripts marked No. 1 and 2, are the work of a very young man from New " York, of the name of Alder. He offers them to the Military Philosophical Society as the first " fruits of his science and patriotism, and requests the minister plenipotentiary of the United " States to have them conveyed to the President of that Society. The minister seizes this op- " portunity of renewing to the President the assurances of his very high consideration, and of " offering to the Society a plan of the late seige of Dantzic, and three of the celebrated battle " of Prussian Eylau, presented by his serene highness the prince of Neuchattel, minister of " war, &c. &c. Paris, Sept. 11, 1807."

The manuscript No. 1, is a project for securing the city and harbor of New York from the attack of a hostile force; this memoir is divided into the following parts:

THE INTRODUCTION.

Chap. 1. Of the batteries destined to defend New York.

Chap. 2. Of the Staccadoes, or obstructions.

Chap. 3. Of the defence of the Bay of New York by means of fire ships, prames, gun-boats and marine batteries.

References and observations in the plans accompanying the memoir.

The manuscript No. 2, consists of detailed notes in alphabetical order, from A to H inclusive.

Captain Richard Whiley, of U. S. artillery, has presented eight manuscript books, being all the orders issued by General Wayne in his late command against the Indians.

Major C. Swan, paymaster of the army, has presented the formation of a legion and four sub-legions, a description of the manœuvres and order of march through the woods, with a draft of the order of battle.

The President produced a model of a carriage, calculated for tower casmated batteries, according to the system of Montalambert, so contrived that the heaviest cannon may be managed at the distance of ten feet from center to center of each embrazure. The same calibre on the ordinary sea coast carriages require a distance of eighteen feet, so that by this means twenty pieces may be fought on the same foundation, which hitherto could only contain eleven.

Mr. Benjamin Dearborn presented to the society an instrument invented by himself, called an anglet. This instrument is made of brass, and folds up into the length of a two foot rule. It contains within itself a spirit level, which is so contrived that by placing one limb of the rule on any ascent or descent, and bringing the liquid in the tube to its level, the true angle is immediately marked by an index. The portability of this instrument, and its easy application to various objects constitute its peculiar utility.

Mr. Dearborn also presented the constitution of the New England association of inventors and patrons of useful arts, together with the first number of the first volume of their transactions.

Mr. Professor Hasler, of the military academy at West Point, has presented a plan intended for the improvement of that institution. As this is a subject which will probably receive the attention of the government, it is at present thought unnecessary to publish its details.

Col. Allan M'Lane, formerly captain of light horse in the revolutionary army, has presented his journal, with many original papers, containing a very interesting account of occurrences from 1775, to the end of the war; among these are several original general orders by General Washington himself, and one in particular, when the British had possession of Philadelphia, is contained in 27 questions which Capt. M'Lane, as commandant of a reconnoitring detachment, consisting of 100 men, is directed to answer by his observations. This mode of directing the attention of a detachment for observation to certain points, by means of questions to be answered, is so extremely useful, that it cannot be considered improper to give it at length, and perpetuate this relict of our illustrious chief, in the form of a model, for any future similar occasion.

Questions in General WASHINGTON'S *hand writing.*

First. What number of troops supposed to be in Gen. Howe's army, and how disposed of?

2d. What works thrown up, in and about the city, and what cannon in them?

3d. Have any detachments been made over to the Jersey, and for what purpose?

4th. How many men have they sent over there, and how many pieces of cannon?

5th. What kind of cannon? Whether only field pieces or larger cannon?

6th. What preparations are they making on the water, are they fitting out ships, gallies, fire rafts or floating batteries?

7th. Do they think they can stay in Philadelphia if their shipping cannot pass the forts?

8th. Are they resolved to make any farther attempts on both the forts or either of them, and in what way, whether by storm or siege?

9th. Can you discover whether they will attempt any thing against the forts, and where, observe carefully the preparations making on the river and along the wharves, it is of great importance to know the time or near it?

10th. Is there any talk of leaving Philadelphia and by what route, observe carefully what they are doing with the waggons, whether their baggage is packed up, and what directions their waggons receive?

11th. Are the tories and friends of the British army under much apprehension of their leaving town, and what preparations are they making to remove themselves or their effects?

12th. For what purpose is it understood, the bridge is thrown over the middle ferry, and what force is kept on the west side of the Schuylkill?

13th. Has the bridge been injured by the late storm, or is it passable?

14th. Where are the grenadiers, light infantry, and rangers, and are they making any preparations to move, be particularly careful in observing their motions?

15th. What number of men are sent over to Carpenter's and Province Islands, and how often are they relieved?

16th. In what condition are those banks since the late rain, can waggons and carriages pass so as to transport provisions and stores from the ships to the town ?

17th. In what condition are the troops for provisions, and in what articles is there the greatest scarcity ?

18th. How are the inhabitants situated for provisions ?

19th. What impression has the news of Gen. Burgoyne's surrender made on the British army ?

20th. Is there any conversation in the British army or among the inhabitants of the city, of Gen. Howe's coming out to meet Gen. Washington ?

21st. What is the British army now employed about, note carefully the prices of every thing ?

22d. Does continental money rise or fall in value in the town ?

23d. Can you learn whether there are any preparations making or any intentions to go up the Delaware, to burn the frigates and vessels up there ?

24th. Find out what duty the soldiers do, and whether they are contented, how many nights in the week they are in bed ?

25th. Inquire particularly into the treatment of the prisoners in the new goal, so that if necessary you make oath of it.

26th. Do they compel any to enlist by starving, or otherwise ill treating them ?

27th. Find out how far the redoubts between Delaware and Schuylkill are apart, and whether there are lines or abattis between the redoubts.

Many more communications have been received, which it is at this time impossible to describe, owing to the absence of the records, and measures have been taken by which there is a prospect of having in the Society's possession all that was planned by direction of the board of general officers, for the organization, discipline, and command of the twelve regiments which were raised in 1799.

The same causes which have made this account so imperfect, will, it is hoped, be received as an apology for any incorrectness that may appear in the following list of members, and if any omissions are discovered, the member so omitted will please to attribute it to this its true cause, and not to design.

A LIST OF THE

UNITED STATES MILITARY PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

PATRON, THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

OFFICERS FOR THE YEAR 1808.

President, Jonathan Williams, Col. of Engineers,
Vice President, Charles C. Pinkney, of Charleston, S. C.
Recording Secretary, Francis D. Mason, Professor in the Military Academy,
Corresponding Secretary, Joseph G. Swift, Major of Engineers,
Treasurer, William Popham, of New York,
Keeper of the Cabinet, George Bomford, Captain of Engineers.

Walter K. Armistead, Captain of Engineers,
Gen. John Armstrong, Minister U. S. in Paris,
John Allen, Counsellor at Law, in Litchfield, Connecticut,
John Q. Adams, Senator U. S.
James A. Bayard, Senator U. S.
Samuel Babcock, Lieutenant of Engineers,
Henry Burbeck, Col. Commandant of Eastern Division of Army U. S.
Joel Barlow, of Washington,
Joseph Bloomfield, Governor of New Jersey,
Clement Biddle, formerly Quarter Master General,
William R. Bootes, Captain of Infantry, (Olmulgee, Old Fields, Georgia)
Charles Biddle, late Vice President of Pennsylvania,
Stephen R. Bradley, Senator U. S.
Lloyd Beall, Captain commanding at Rhode Island,
Russell Bissell, [dead] Major of Infantry,
Joseph Blyth, George Town, S. Carolina,
John Bullus, Navy Agent at New York,
James M. Brown,
Daniel A. Buck, Lieutenant of Engineers,
William Bainbridge, Capt. Navy U. S.
William C. C. Claiborne, Governor of Territory New Orleans,
George Clinton, Vice President of the United States,
Dewit Clinton, Mayor of New York,
Thomas H. Cushing, Col. of 2d Regiment of Infantry U. S.
Daniel Clark, Delegate in Congress from New Orleans,
William Crane, of New Jersey,
Clarke,
Philip Van Cortland, of New York,
George Clinton, junr. of New York,
Joseph Clay, of Philadelphia,
Eli B. Clemson, Capt. Infantry U. S. (St. Louis, Louisiana)

John Cassin, Capt. Commanding Navy Yard,
General David Cobb, Taunton, Massachusetts,
General Henry Dearborne, Secretary of War,
Edward De Russy, Cadet of Engineers,
Stephen Decatur, Capt. of the Navy U. S.
Benjamin Dearborn, of Boston,
Jonathan Dayton, late Senator U. S.
John Davie, late Governor N. Carolina, (Envoy to France)
William Dessaussure, of Charleston,
William Eaton, late General at Derne, (Brimfield, Massachusetts)
Thomas B. Earle, Adjutant Gen. State of N. Carolina,
Lieut. John R. Fenwick, Marine Corps,
Constant Freeman, Lieut. Col. U. S. Artillery (Natchitoches, Territory Orleans)
George Fleming, late superintendant Military Stores West Point,
Nehemiah Freeman, Capt. Commanding at Boston,
Robert Fulton, New York,
Charles Gratiot, Capt. of Engineers,
John Garnet, Brunswick, New Jersey,
Peter Gansevorth, Military Agent at Albany,
Nicholas Gilman, Senator U. S.
John F. Grimke, Judge of Superior Court, S. Carolina,
Abijah Hammond, of New York,
Robert Goodloe Harper, Counsellor at Law, Baltimore,
David Humphreys, late Envoy to Spain,
Willam Hull, Governor at Detroit,
William H. Harrison, Governor of Indiana Territory, (Vincennes)
John Hall, Capt. Marines,
Thomas Hunt, Col. of 1st Infantry, (St. Louis, Louisiana)
George Izard, late Captain of Artillery,
Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States,
John Johnson, Lieutenant of Marines,
Rufus King, late Minister of U. S. to Britain,
Jacob Kingsbury, Lieut. Col. of 1st Infantry, (Fort Adams, Mississippi Territory)
Benjamin Latrobe, Director of Public Buildings U. S.
Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, now Collector at Boston,
John Langdon, Governor of New Hampshire,
Tobias Lear, Consul of U. S. at Algiers,
Robert R. Livingston, late Minister U. S. to France,
David Lenox, late Major, now President of Bank U. S.
Merriwether Louis, Governor of Louisiana, (St. Louis)
Jared Mansfield, Lieut. Col. of Engineers, acting Surveyor General of U. S
Alexander Macomb, Major of Engineers,
William M'Ree, Captain of Engineers,
James Madison, Secretary of State of U. S.
Jacob Morton, Brigadier Gen. of New York Artillery,
Thomas M'Kean, Governor of Pennsylvania,
General William M'Pherson, now Naval Officer U. S. at Philadelphia,
Gen. John Marshall, now Chief Justice U. S.
James Monroe, late Minister U. S. to Britain,
John Milledge, Senator U. S.
William M'Creery, Member of Congress,

Jonathan Mason, of Boston, Massachusetts,
Alexander Murray, Capt. U. S. Navy,
Julian U. Niemcewicz, formerly of Poland, Citizen U. S.
William North, late Adjutant Gen. U. S.
Aaron Ogden, late Colonel U. S.
Pressly N. O. Brannon, Artillery U. S. (Michilimackanac)
William Paterson, [dead] late Judge of Supreme Court,
Edward Preble, [dead] late Commodore U. S.
William Popham, late Aid to Baron Steuben, Treasurer of U. S. M. P. S. New York,
Ninian Pinkney, Capt. of Infantry, (Fort M'Henry)
Alden Partridge, Lieut. of Engineers,
William Partridge, Lieut. of Engineers,
Robert Patton, late Capt. U. S. Army, Post Master, Philadelphia,
Thomas Pinkney, late Major of U. S. Army,
Moses Porter, Major of Artillery U. S.
Josiah Quincy, Member of Congress, U. S.
John Rutledge, Charleston, S. C.
Gen. Jacob Read, Charleston, S. C.
Solomon Van Ransellaer, Adjutant Gen. Albany, N. Y.
Thomas M. Randolph, of Virginia,
David Ramsay, Charleston, S. C.
James Ricketts, of Elizabeth Town, N. Jersey,
Hezekiah Rogers, of War Department, Secretary pro tem. U. S. M. P. S.
K. Van Ranselaer, Member of Congress,
Gen. Ebenezer Stevens, N. York Artillery,
Louis Simond, of New York,
Caleb Strong, late Governor of Massachusetts,
Samuel Smith, Senator U. S.
Robert Smith, Secretary of Navy,
Gen. Arthur St. Clair, of Pennsylvania,
William Short, late Charge des Affairs at Madrid,
Col. Daniel Stevens, of S. Carolina,
General Benjamin Smith, of Wilmington, N. Carolina,
John Saunders, Capt. of Artillery U. S. (Norfolk, Virginia)
General Thomas Sumter, Senator U. S.
Caleb Swan, Pay Master to the Army,
Foster Swift, of Taunton, Massachusetts,
James Sullivan, Governor of Massachusetts,
William L. Smith, of Charleston, S. Carolina, late Minister U. S. at Lisbon,
Amos Stoddart, Major of Artillerists, Fort Adams,
John Tayloe, Major of Cavalry, Washington, S. C.
Sylvanus Thayer, Lieutenant of Engineers,
Thomas Tillotson, of New York,
Colonel Joseph G. Totten, Lieut. of Engineers,
John Trumbull, of New York,
Thomas Truxton, Commodore in the Navy U. S.
Thomas Tingey, Port Commodore, Washington,
Thomas T. Tucker, Treasurer, U. S.
James Wilkinson, Brigadier General Commandant of Army U. S.
John B. Walback, Capt. of Artillery, Commanding Fort Constitution,
Samuel White, Senator U. S.

Bushrod Washington, Judge of Superior Court U. S.
Colonel William Washington, Charleston, S. Carolina,
Samuel Webber, of Vermont,
Prentice Willard, Lieut. of Engineers,
Eleazer D. Wood, Lieut. of Engineers,
Alexander J. Williams, Cadet of Engineers,
Richard Whiley, Capt. Artillery, Commanding Fort Columbus,
Franklin Wharton, Lieut. Col. Commandant Marine Corps,
Henry J. Williams, Cadet Engineers,
John Williams, Professor, Cambridge.

On motion,

Resolved, That the thanks of this Society be given to the President for his address delivered this evening, and that the Secretary pro tem. be desired to publish the same in the National Intelligencer in this city, with a request that it may be printed in the other papers of the United States; and also separately, for the use of the members of this Society.

On motion,

Resolved, That the expence of the publication of the address, communications, &c. of the President be defrayed from the funds of the Society.

Extract from the minutes,

HEZ. ROGERS, *Secretary pro tem.*